To: The Fellowship Program, Institute of Politics

Harvard University

Re: Avshalom Vilan

I warmly recommend FMK Avshalom Vilan for Harvard University's Institute of Politics Fellowship Program.

I have known Mr. Vilan since he was eighteen years old, serving under my command in Sayeret Matkal – the IDF's elite commando unit, and later on as a Member of Knesset during my tenure as Prime Minister of Israel and Minister of Defense.

As a soldier under my command Mr. Vilan participated in dozens of operations in which he demonstrated not only courage, but also leadership and an ability to think creatively and innovatively. These same characteristics are what made him an excellent an outstanding Member of Knesset as well. Mr. Vilan was highly involved in the wide spectrum of parliamentary activity and specifically in the Finance and the Economic Affairs committees. He was of great assistance for me as Prime Minister in parliamentary affairs and our collaboration was remarkable. I also used Mr. Vilan for delicate and sensitive political missions in Israel and abroad.

Avshalom Vilan is an intelligent man with high work morality, a man of virtue and truth with high sense of responsibility. His interpersonal relationships are excellent, and he has the ability to connect to people, whether from all sectors of society.

Avshalom Vilan brings an interesting combination of traits, sometimes contradictory, that make him a unique personality in the Israeli political landscape. He is a fierce full combat soldier who devoted his adult life for the search of peace with the Palestinians, a brilliant and effective implementer and a particular legislator. He has high interpersonal capability and is an excellent team player, a kibbutz member and a socialist who does not stick to clichés and examines economic and social issues with an open mind, a seasoned politician who never compromised his integrity and values.

As an alumnus of Stanford University, and as someone who has long life experience of working intimately with senior decision makers in the United States of America, I am deeply convinced that the students of Harvard University will gain valuable education and experience from the participation of Mr. Vilan in your program.

Sincerely,

Ehud Barak

Former Prime Minister and Minister of Defense

State of Israel